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TAGS: [CH](#) [KSCA](#) [PARM](#) [PREL](#) [TPHY](#) [TSPA](#) [TSPL](#)
SUBJECT: NOTIFICATION REGARDING NASA-CNSA CIVIL SPACE
COOPERATION

REF: A. STATE 4837
[1](#)B. BEIJING 123
[1](#)C. STATE 57679
[1](#)D. BEIJING 2278

Classified By: ISN/MDSP DAVID HOPPLER REASONS 1.4 (a) (d) (e) and (g)

[1](#)1. 1. (U) THIS IS AN ACTION REQUEST. See paragraph 3 below.

[1](#)2. BACKGROUND:

[1](#)A. (S) On January 6, 2008, the State Department instructed nine posts to deliver Washington's request to allied host governments for their continued assistance in applying diplomatic pressure on China concerning the GOC's January 11, 2007, anti-satellite flight-test (REFTEL A). In making this request, the United States shared with allies a non-paper that was eventually provided to Deng Hongbo, Deputy Director General of the North American Affairs Department of the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, on January 11, 2008 (REFTEL B).

In this non-paper, the U.S. noted that:

-- The United States believes China's development and testing of such capabilities is inconsistent with the constructive relationship that our Presidents have outlined, including in the area of civil space cooperation.

-- The U.S. is refraining from any expansion of space-related cooperation with China. One of the primary reasons for this position is the continued lack of transparency from China regarding the full range of China's space activities.

-- One sign of increased transparency would be forthright responses to a series of unanswered questions posed immediately following their ASAT test in a January 2007 demarche.

[1](#)B. (SBU) Following his September 2006 visit to the People's Republic of China (PRC), the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) advised the President of NASA's desire to establish two working groups with the China National Space Administration (CNSA) to explore areas of mutual interest related to Earth science and

space science. Since the NASA Administrator's visit, there have been no bilateral discussions between the two agencies, other than exchanges of letters, in which mutual interest in the establishment of the working groups was confirmed.

¶C. (SBU) On May 30, 2008, Embassy Beijing delivered a letter from Michael O'Brien, NASA Assistant Administrator for External Relations, accepting the CNSA's invitation for a NASA delegation to visit China (REFTEL D). On June 11, CNSA Vice Administrator Luo Ge extended an invitation for a high-level delegation to visit China. In subsequent communications between NASA and CNSA, it was agreed that AA O'Brien will lead a delegation to China on June 30-July 1 (REFTEL E).

¶D. (SBU) Interagency discussions on potential NASA engagement with CNSA have been underway since March 2008. These discussions culminated in the development of guidelines, including security and counterintelligence, under which NASA, in coordination with other U.S. government agencies, will engage CNSA, through the scientific working groups, to explore potential areas of scientific cooperation. The objective of this engagement will be to encourage behavior consistent with the responsible stakeholder role we support for the PRC, including transparency and insight into the PRC's space activities. A complementary goal will be to advance U.S. scientific understanding in Earth and space science through international cooperation, as encouraged by the National Security Policy Directive-49 on "National Space Policy" signed by the President on August 31, 2006.

¶E. (SBU) The near-term objective of the scientific working groups will be to identify potential areas of cooperation between NASA and CNSA. Prior to any U.S.-China agreement, the U.S. interagency will approve any such specific cooperative efforts involving information exchanges.

¶3. (C) GUIDANCE REQUEST: The overseas delivery of the U.S. Non-Paper at paragraph 4 is embargoed until NOON (Eastern Standard Time), June 26, 2008, when NASA will notify the pertinent Congressional Committees. Delivery of U.S. Non-Paper should occur as soon as possible thereafter. For Berlin, Canberra, London, Ottawa, Paris, Rome, Seoul, Tel Aviv, Tokyo, USEU and Moscow: Embassies are instructed to deliver the U.S. non-paper in paragraph 4 to their host government of NASA's planned talks with the CNSA. Delivery of the U.S. non-paper by Embassies Tokyo and Moscow to host governments should be synchronized with the NASA Overseas Representative at their posts providing the same non-paper to the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency and Russian Federal Space Agency (Roscosmos). Delivery of the U.S. non-paper by Embassies Berlin, Paris, London and Rome to host governments and by USEU to the European Union should be synchronized with the delivery of the U.S. non-paper that the NASA Overseas Representative in Paris will provide to the European Space Agency. Delivery of the U.S. non-paper by Embassy Ottawa to the GoC should be synchronized with the delivery of the U.S. non-paper by NASA Headquarters to the Canadian Space Agency. Posts and NASA Overseas Representatives may draw upon the U.S. non-paper for talking points and capital-specific talking points in paragraphs 5-9, as appropriate for each recipient. As appropriate, Posts and NASA Overseas Representatives may draw upon the Q's and A's in paragraph 9 to answer host government questions. Embassies are requested to provide confirmation of delivery and any reactions provided at the time of delivery. Any additional questions from host governments should be referred to the NASA Office of External Relations in Washington (PoC: Name, Number, email), with info copies to the Department's Bureau of Oceans, Environment and Science (PoC: David Turner, 1-202-663-2397, turnerda@state.gov) and the Bureau of International Security and Non-Proliferation (PoC: Richard Buenn eke, 1-202-647-3731; buennekerh@state.gov).

¶4. (SBU) For Berlin, Canberra, London, Ottawa, Paris, Rome, Seoul, Tel Aviv, Tokyo, USEU and Moscow:

BEGIN U.S. NON-PAPER:

United States of America
Non-Paper
June 26, 2008

-- We would like to inform you that the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) is planning to undertake initial discussions with the China National Space Administration (CNSA) related to Earth and space science. The first of these talks is currently scheduled for June 30-July 1 in Beijing.

-- The principles of transparency, reciprocity, and mutual benefit will form the guiding principles for any possible NASA cooperation with CNSA.

-- Any prospective scientific cooperation will center on complementary measurements and data exchange on missions that are already being pursued in each country in the fields of Earth and space science.

-- Beijing's continued lack of transparency regarding Chinese space activities has been one of the primary reasons that the U.S. had refrained in the past from any new civil space cooperation with CNSA.

-- We remain concerned about the Government of China's continued refusal to provide adequate responses to questions raised by the Chinese military's direct-ascent anti-satellite test in January 2007. In diplomatic and military-to-military channels, the United States has continued, and will continue, to press the Chinese government for satisfactory answers.

-- During the planned June 30-July 1 meeting between NASA and CNSA, the U.S. delegation will discuss with their Chinese counterparts the need for China to act as a responsible stakeholder in the peaceful exploration and use of outer space.

-- The U.S. delegation will also provide a U.S. paper that will note that the U.S. is still waiting for the Government of China to provide satisfactory responses to unanswered questions concerning China's January 2007 ASAT test. The U.S. delegation will also emphasize that CNSA's assistance in helping to provide this response would contribute to building the constructive relationship that our two Presidents have outlined in civil space cooperation.

-- All interactions by NASA with CNSA will be in accordance with extant law and policy. In compliance with relevant export control laws, policies, and regulations, no controlled technical data, hardware, or defense services will be transferred or provided to Chinese entities as part of either the initial exploratory discussions or future engagement.

-- The working group meetings will be exploratory in nature and consist only of discussions of potential interests and capabilities. All relevant agencies of the U.S. Government will review specific proposals for cooperation prior to formalization with the CNSA.

-- Earth science discussions might include such topics as access to global measurements from ocean-observing satellites; exchanges of data from aerosol robotic network ground stations; and activities related to existing geodetic networks. Space science discussions might include such topics as data exchanges related to robotic lunar and planetary exploration, astrophysics, and heliophysics missions; collaborative research and data analyses; and an invitation to researchers from China to participate, along with other international partners, in studying a proposed initiative to create a network of science instruments on the lunar surface.

-- NASA will not discuss human spaceflight with CNSA and no discussion of China's involvement in the International Space Station program will be undertaken.

-- We hope, and expect, that our civil space cooperation with China will result in a mutually beneficial outcome, and we will continue to keep you informed on the status of this cooperative endeavor.

END U.S. NON-PAPER.

¶5. (S//REL AS, CA, FR, IT, JP, KS, GM, and UK) For Berlin, Canberra, London, Ottawa, Paris, Rome, Seoul, and Tokyo:

--We are grateful for your government's continuing assistance in applying diplomatic pressure on China regarding its 2007 ASAT test. After our meetings from June 30 -July 1, we will inform you of the exploratory talks with the Chinese National Space Administration. We also will continue to consult with you on the implications of China's direct-ascent ASAT and other counter-space activities both for the space environment and for our shared security interests. The objective of NASA's engagement with the Chinese National Space Administration will be to encourage behavior consistent with the responsible stakeholder role we support for the People's Republic of China, including transparency regarding, and insight into, the PRC's space activities.

¶6. (SBU) For Moscow, Paris (for European Space Agency) and USEU (for European Union):

--As key partners with NASA in the International Space Station, we wish to inform you of our planned discussions with the Chinese National Space Administration. NASA's engagement with the Chinese National Space Administration will seek to encourage behavior consistent with the responsible stakeholder role we support for the People's Republic of China, including transparency regarding the PRC's space activities.

¶7. (C//REL FR and UK) For London and Paris:

--We look forward to continuing our bilateral strategic space dialogues with you. We highly value your counsel and our discussions during the past year have identified many opportunities for increased cooperation and diplomatic coordination.

¶8. (C//REL AS and IS) For Canberra and Tel Aviv:

--As we noted earlier this year, we wish to initiate a bilateral strategic space dialogue with you in 2008 to address common concerns regarding protection of our shared national security space interests and new opportunities for cooperation and diplomatic coordination. The U.S. Department of State's point of contact for arranging these discussions is Mr. Richard Buenneke, Deputy Director of the Office of Missile Defense and Space Policy, Bureau of International Security and Nonproliferation, 1 (202) 647-3731 or buennekerh@state.gov.

¶9. (C//REL CA, GM, IT and JP) For Ottawa, Berlin, Rome and Tokyo:

--We look forward to the strategic space dialogues that we have agreed to hold later this year. The U.S. Department of State's Office of Missile Defense and Space Policy will continue to work with your experts to make specific arrangements.

¶10. (SBU) BEGIN "IF RAISED" BY HOST GOVERNMENT TALKING POINTS:

a. If host government asks about the objectives of NASA's discussions with CNSA:

-- NASA intends to follow-up on previous discussions with CNSA concerning the establishment of Earth and space science working groups.

-- The goal of the initial discussions will be for each side

to understand the interests and capabilities of the other.

-- The proposed areas of discussion will center on complementary measurements and data exchange on missions that are already being pursued in each country in the fields of Earth and space science.

-- It could be beneficial to NASA to cooperate with CNSA in these areas in order to share data, to reduce mission cost and duplication, and to advance scientific knowledge.

b. If host governments asks about the possibility of NASA cooperating with China in the field of lunar robotic exploration or even a human moon landing:

-- In the exploration arena, we are discussing with many countries, including China, coordination of potential lunar activities as part of the on-going multilateral global exploration strategy development.

c. If host government asks how cooperation with CNSA is consistent with the United States' condemnation of the January 2007 Chinese ASAT test:

-- NASA is not proposing to embark upon any significant new cooperation with CNSA at this point. Cooperation will be limited to modest proposals, focused primarily on cooperative space science research.

-- The principles of transparency, reciprocity, and mutual benefit must serve as the guiding principles for all NASA discussions with the CNSA.

d. If host government asks if there are other agencies in the U.S. government currently collaborating with China:

-- Other U.S. science agencies such as the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and National Science Foundation (NSF) currently have some cooperation with Chinese agencies and are active participants in multilateral groups involving Chinese agencies.

e. If host government asks about laws relevant to this sort of cooperation with China:

-- In compliance with relevant export control laws, policies, and regulations, no controlled technical data, hardware, or defense services will be transferred or provided to PRC entities as part of either the initial exploratory discussions or future engagement.

END "IF RAISED" TALKING POINTS.

END CABLE TEXT.

RICE